

Yellow Men Sleep

By JEREMY LANE

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CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Can had not known where his comrades were lodged. He became sure of the voice. The three guards, perhaps alarmed, or for some like reason universally valid with troops of men at night, were not holding their post of duty, for the stairway was empty. A talk with Andrew March was worth a risk; it was necessary if they were to work together for escape. They would need a policy to guide their remaining days to captivity. Anything was better than these brooding meditations alone. The fire in the young prisoner's veins focused to some purpose. He descended the stairs, but at the foot of them discovered that they had brought him no nearer the voice. In fact, there were other voices unpleasantly near. He went up again and leaned over his wall to learn how the monkey climbed up and down so readily. Quite certainly now he heard his friend talking. The stars were a cool, faint light upon the walls, which were rough-hewn. He could distinguish the ledge of a window below him, half-way to the ground.

He knotted the silken cloth from the divan in the first room and fastened one end of this soft rope to the stone bench. It was not difficult to let himself down over the rim of wall, easing the strain by pressing his knees into the depressions of masonry. His foot found the ledge. He grimly hoped that he had heard aright, that March was really near. The window was open, the prayer stopped.

"Hello!"

The stillness of the whole earth seemed to originate just at this window ledge. Then a hand touched him and March whispered: "Don't talk."

The older prisoner moved back into the darkness, while Con came in at the window. Suddenly there began a scramble, with stormy blows and a rattle. March was at grips with his guard, having taken for granted that Levinton meant to attempt escape. Con sensed this mistake, but it was not a time for explanation. He stepped forward uncertainly, his hands felt-

Side by side they ran, following the trail of the pack-camels. Behind them, within the walls, the aged crier of the hours sent up his voice, full to trembling with the news. And arousing every soldier, a bar of hollow brass clanged out into the sleeping city.

"We tipped over the hump-backs," said Con.

CHAPTER X.

Gemmed Eyes.

Square patches of koreah lay on each side of the trail. The mines were perhaps a mile or less to eastward; and beyond that ridge an infinity of shifting dry naught. The stars sent a pallor that was diffused in the fog from the ditches. At night these lowlands about the city were cool. The black vague hill that was the palace was receding into the gloom as the two hastened on. The net of distant cries was spreading.

"Do you suppose," suggested Levinton, "that we can keep under cover, and perhaps manage to get a beast of some kind, and then sprint for the water hole?"

Con realized very well that the nearest water hole was a matter of days, once they left the zone of fertility. Food was yet to be considered, and a city was rising to seek them out and punish. But he felt the need of cheering his friend.

"We can get into the vineyard," he continued with enthusiasm he did not feel, "and the fruit will serve for water, too—and lay for a camel—and you still have the guidebook on your foot."

Andrew March laughed miserably. He saw what his friend was trying to do.

"Why not knock at the gates," said March, "and demand water and provisions for our return trip?"

"Well, we blundered out here," said Levinton, "and half the planet was bucking us—stones for rain, and spinning dust instead of a breeze, with a few robber giants on the side—so maybe we can break away for home again."

"I don't mean to be sarcastic," said March very humbly. "I understand you. You are trying to make me feel happier. But I do not dodge the responsibility. I was grossly selfish. My work, and all my hopes, led me here. And I wanted a partner, to face the Gobi, some one strong and young, who didn't take himself seriously, some one with the ability to lose decency. It had to be an artist. You were the one I found. But I did not want it to mean sacrifice. I made myself believe we should not actually lose. I held certain dreams. They were beautiful, they baited you, as they baited me long ago, and always. But I am done with dreaming. Tau Kuan is death to all dreams except that yellow fantasy. It is so cold—do you know what I mean? The hand that guides it is the archetype of inflexible purpose. The empire is not contained within the walls. It spreads beyond the Gobi, into Dory street; yes, and further, a web of horror. It does not spring from life. The only human being within those walls has been slowly and fully poisoned. She can never know life. You have seen that."

March paused, and Levinton shivered. They peered into the darkness ahead. One direction seemed as unprofitable as another. Far to the rear the base of the palace showed red in torch reflection, and the brazen gong ceased its pulse of alarm. March asked:

"Will you try to forgive me?"

Con spoke quietly. "You are forgetting something. You are the difference between the past and future to me. Suppose I had found my man that night, away back in Cincinnati; I should have far thicker walls bothering me tonight, and all the rest of my nights. Why do you forget that you are the man who got me out of all that? You were a federal officer, and ought to have jailed me. Instead, I owe every minute of my freedom to you. I don't know now why I wanted to shoot him up, I can't recall his name or his face, but I was out to get him, and would have finished strong, only you came in front of me, and—why, I never began to live until after you took me home that night!"

"I used to stand on Rush street bridge in Chicago and, if I was far enough gone, I could think I was looking at the Thames and the lights of the British shipping, or I'd think I was an Arabian caliph, nosing about my own city at night. Only it needed a big thrust to shift the globe around that way and make a Greek waiter look like the king of Ashamed in disguise. I've looked over toward Brooklyn and told myself I was on the Bund at Shanghai. But it couldn't be done that way. I was close to the rocks. You seemed to know what I wanted. You opened the world. Do you think I would back up, even if I could? You did not bait me. It was understood that I should probably die along the way, in the Gobi. It's been a grand passage."

"Thank you," returned the older man. And in the twilight their hands met and gripped an instant.

Whatever turmoil was imaginable within the city, the Americans were

too far away to hear it, and the secrecy of the dark gave them a kind of leisure, with also a stimulation. They continued rapidly beside the gray ditches, not particularly heedful of direction. They jumped over the intersecting arms of irrigation, and at moments caught the low gurgle of spring-water. It occurred to Con that his borrowed eastern garments were very practical. The firm, broad sash and twisted breeches gave support as he cleared the ditches, the sandals were snug and curiously satisfactory. He was not so sure that he was wholly a western person. He no longer marvelled at his blouse, with its inner pockets and folds.

Once he thought that an advance guard of the pursuers had overtaken them. They stopped short to listen, but heard nothing. March was uneasy. Con, who felt that there was nothing further to be lost, was almost indifferent. He could not think his way clear. It was grimly unpleasant to remember what they had done to March's guard, but one crime more or less in the eyes of Tau Kuan did not matter now. There came the sense of some one behind them, but there was no sound in the pale breath of the ditches. Con noted a low shape like a dog, across the nearest ditch. Quickly a second joined it. Two figures hurried out of the gloom and landed at the white man's feet. They were the hunched and deformed little men of the sand-hills, a dozen or more, and they broke into talking. Their arms were like metal bands upon Levinton. The gong had reached them and brought them up out of their warrens. It seemed they were animated by curiosity and a natural malice more than by the idea of reward.

Struggle was unavailing. These miners had terrible arms, despite bodies that were shrunken and grotesque. March was speaking in native dialect. Levinton was borne off his feet, lifted over the last ditch, and then deftly stretched face downward upon the sand. March was pleading. The hills were near.

Con did not understand the appeal March was making, but was surprised at the force of it. They were listening, reluctant, like some blind elf turned aside for a moment. March went on fervently.

Points of light were low toward the city, the torches coming out. It seemed that the gray-haired man's argument had an effect, for Levinton was picked up as before, and carried. In the confusion he saw that they were not going in the direction of the city. The bones of their shoulders hurt his back. He was unable to turn. Forty paces of this and they paused. March repeated his phrases. Levinton was allowed to stand upon his feet, but his hands were held. Then the group ran with him up the hill.

"What did you say?" inquired Con. "I reminded them that they have no more love for the city than we, and that our enemy is their enemy."

"What made you think of that?"

"They are slaves, worse—"

This was cut short as the workers let go Con's wrists, and he pitched feet first into perfect blackness. The fall was giddy; then a scramble down an incline of loose earth. Choking with the dust, he could not guess to what depth he was sliding. Something came down upon his head, and this was Andrew March.

"You asked them to take us in?"

"Yes. It occurred to me that they do not love their masters. I referred to that, and promised everything I could think of, if they would not turn us over to the horsemen."

The center of the world gave forth a speck of light that was a torch. The party that had come up at the summons of the distant gong was close about the white men again at the base of the shaft, which seemed endlessly large; and other torches were coming nearer out of blackness. Still it was not clear to Con, why the miners did not take them to the city. The hovering figures in the cavern seemed half afraid, half spiteful. March was doing his best in Chinese.

The torches threw a serried glare on the rock walls of the underground passage. It was low but very wide. In another chamber, to which the prisoners were led, the roof was higher, of ragged sandstone, and the floor had been swept. Here was the settlement of workers, every one deformed below the shoulders.

Out of the red-light press of these came a figure but slightly more erect than his fellows. He was dark of skin, but his eyes were full and did not slant or pinch. His bare throat was significant of strength and poise, from no mean ancestry, but his knees locked and jointed pitifully, as from some calamitous accident.

"Friend," he said in a low voice.

It was music to hear the English word.

The miners were waving torches of bitumen over their large heads. The length and agility of their arms was unlike. They looked to be of a race of Asiatic changelings, their hair coiled into little caps, one or two showing queues, and all with the peculiar malformation of spine. Every eye gleamed upon Levinton.

"Friend," replied Con.

"They come for you," said the dark-skinned person who stood before the crowd.

"Down here?"

"Yes. All where."

"Hide us. Give us protection, friend."

"Yes. You say you befriended us."

The speaker turned to March, who answered: "Yes. We will, if you protect us now. We come from the most powerful country in the world. Help us return to it."

"No, no!" said the dark-faced man.

"I beg of you!" urged March.

"Hold too big, too big."

"Talk of that later. But hide us away now."

"They see your footprints, and ask us. What?"

"Say that we were killed and thrown to the ditches."

"Yes," said the speaker of English.

He turned to confer with several others, in a rapid monotone.

Con said to his friend: "What is to be?"

"Looks Arabian," replied March.

The speaker had heard the word, and he turned sharply, with a smile parting his lips. From the waist up he was a handsome man of forty.

"Yes, Arab," he said. "Fifteen, big, I was, at sea. I know your country—Saint Lawrence, Buffalo—"

"Niagara Falls," offered Levinton.

"Ah, yes!" exclaimed the sailor from Amby. He smiled more broadly at the recollection. "Twenty year—yes—twenty—that. Does she fall continue?"

"Yes," replied Con, joining in the smile. "How did you come here?"

"Caravan. The sea weary me, fifteen years more now. Caravan from

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Ribbons Deftly Used in Frocks



RIBBONS have always played a prominent part in the apparel of women, but they were never so important as they are now. Their manufacturers look to the ingenuity of designers of dress accessories, of millinery and of innumerable pretty furnishings to extend the demand for their products, and these designers have accomplished more than was expected of them. The beauty of the ribbons themselves, proves an inspiration and they have long since ceased to be used merely as decorations. In millinery they make entire hats and have for several seasons, so that the ribbon hat has an established place which it will continue to fill.

By way of showing what can be done with it in the hands of artists, several stars in our American firmament of dress creators have embodied ribbons in summer frocks—and in all sorts of frocks—for morning, afternoon and evening. The results were so good that the idea will carry over—we shall find ribbons in the styles for fall. It was at its best in summery afternoon and evening dresses and an adorable example for either afternoon or evening wear appears in the dress illustrated. It is of lace bonneting, on a net foundation, with very wide and very soft satin ribbon forming part of the bodice and skirt drapery. The ribbon is shirred in four little tufts at the front and in a single shirring at the side where it forms full paniers and falls in two long ends from under them. A few little blossoms made of narrow ribbon and having millinery centers, find a resting place on the shoulders, and the same blossoms set in a border and rows on a filmy parasol make it a sister to the lovely frock. After the accomplishments of these artists in summer frocks, curiosity makes whatever they will present for fall already interesting to the fashion reporter.

Late Summer and Its Brides



ALTHOUGH tradition gives June the preference for summer weddings and October proves to be the bride's next choice, no month is entirely forsaken by them. The maid that decides for late summer has some advantages, and among them is the chance to profit by the experience of June brides when she chooses her wedding gown. There were so many innovations in the gowning of this year's brides, great costumers made excursions away from the traditional all-white and gave us white with silver, white and gold and even wedding veils in pale gold. It is for the bride of tomorrow to say whether she will regard these new ideas with favor or fix her allegiance upon the all-white bridal costume.

Experimenting with the wedding veil brought out some new and ingenious adjustments of it and also the veil of chiffon instead of tulle. Premet gave to this particular June a chiffon veil embroidered in silver roses and edged with pearl beads, clinging to the head and revealing the uncovered face through a slit at the front. The bride shown in the picture has chosen this madonna-like draping of the veil, but clings to traditional orange blossoms in wreaths that encircle her head. Her frock of chiffon is laid in deep tucks below the hips, caught up a little at the sides and embellished with occasional clusters of orange blossoms set on the tucks.

Never were bridesmaids more daintily clad in fanciful and gay colors than those who ushered in the brides of June. Taffeta and organdie made a majority of their flowerlike frocks, and they were designed with exhaustless ingenuity. The petal frocks and apron frocks, many frills and lovely embroidery made the achievements of the designers seem to excel all efforts of other Junes. The bride of late summer may follow these precedents.

A dignified costume for a wedding guest finds place in the picture shown here. In dark blue georgette and cream-colored lace it is brightened by a corsage of flowers and a hat of cream georgette and black velvet ribbon. It offers a suggestion for the youthful looking mother of the bride.

Not many brides will choose other than all-white for their own costumes, and not many will resist the gay and beautiful colors that are fashionable for their maids, together making a blithe cortege.

Julia Bottomly

Novel Trimming.
An ordinary overblouse is trimmed with checked gingham.



In the Gloom He Leapt at the Larger Form, a Desert Soldier Whose Arms Whipped About Like Falling Trees.

ing for battle. In the gloom he leapt at the larger form, a desert soldier, whose arms whipped about like falling trees. Three throats strained for breath, but it was the warrior who snatched the white man's hand. He hit Con's palm and that closed the brief battle. If angered Levinton and he were a close hand. The huge son of a woman collapsed. The figure of a woman emerged from a shadowy corner. She moaned softly, and her robes fell. She ran out.

"She gave me an alarm," said March.

"Your friend?"

"Yes, as much as they do."

"But she refused—"

With these words the two prisoners in the window ledge, glanced through the darkness at the soldier, a hulking, silent figure in a shadow, and dropped to the ground.

There was considerable. It rained on their legs, but pain was overlooked. They ran close under the eastern wall of the palace, turning at the north end, across the broad lawn, to the lane beyond which were the dwellings of the fighters. All was dark. They met no sentinel. The desert scarcely required watching. They sped over the heavy dust of the street and gained the high-arched gate. A worn ladder was hooked here for antique battle uses. From the top of the fortification they glanced down at another necessary jump, and took it.